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MOFFITT GENEALOGY

A Genealogical Record of

Silas Moffitt

and

Hannah Wilkinson Moffitt

Early Pioneer Settlers of Hamilton County, Indiana

Their Ancestors and their Descendants

1928

Compiled by Frank Moffitt

860

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ANCESTRY

NESTLED among the hills of Southern Scotland is a town of some 2,000 inhabitants which is named Moffat. Near this town is Moffats Wells, a mineral spring whose waters are supposed to possess some medicinal value, somewhat similar to those of our own Hoosier springs at French Lick.

Whether the town took its name from the tribe or clan name of the people living there, or whether the inhabitants took their name from the community in which they lived is not positively known, but the Moffat name wherever it is found in America and under various spellings generally accepts this little Scottish town as its ancestral home.

Much of the earlier history of this family name has been lost, due to the darkness of the dark ages. Still it is met with in Scottish history sufficiently frequent to indicate that the Moffat Clan has been one of considerable influence in that country for five hundred years or more.

During the religious wars in England the Moffats fought under the Presbyterian banner, and when their forces lost, many of the defenders of this belief were banished from the country, while others crossed over to Ireland of their own accord. Later many of them found their way to America.

It is the primary purpose of this paper to follow the fortunes and misfortunes of the Moffat name only as it concerns the history of Silas Moffitt and his wife, Hannah Wilkinson Moffitt, of the North Carolina line of Moffitts, who were early pioneers of Hamilton County, Indiana, including their direct ancestry and their descendants.

Pursuing this purpose, the first event of our narrative will be the wedding of Robert Moffat to Margaret Stuart at Moffat Wells, Scotland. The date of this event is not given, but is supposed to be about 1750. Margaret Stuart, according to family tradition, was a descendant of the royal family of Stuarts who ruled Scotland for 200 years and England and Scotland combined for another century following the ascension of King James to the English throne in 1603. However, a "Stranger filled the Stuart throne" at the time of our ancestral wedding, and the former Stuart royalty was only

a memory. This proud Stuart blood still mingles in European royalty and can be traced to good Queen Victoria and the present ruling house of England, to Maria Theresa, the wise Queen of Bavaria, and even to Kaiser Bill himself.

After their marriage, Robert and Margaret migrated to Donegal County, Ireland. Their children born in Ireland were: James, Charles, William, Adam, Margaret, Catharine, Robert, Mary, Hugh, Patrick and John. Of these children all but Catharine and Patrick emigrated to America. Robert is supposed to have died at sea on his way back to Ireland. John returned to Ireland, married and died there. The dates in which these brothers came to America are not definitely known. According to tradition, William came over first, alone, and went back. Being pleased with the country, he and five other brothers afterward came to Philadelphia and remained there for some time. Later they went to Chatham or Randolph County, N. C.

There is also a family tradition which accounts for the change in the spelling of the Moffat name. When the sons of Robert and Margaret Moffat left Ireland for America they agreed to adopt the "itt" ending of the name in place of the original "at." This spelling to identify them wherever the name might be found, as belonging to the Robert Moffitt line.

William married Mary Davis and Hugh married Hannah Davis, both being daughters of Charles Davis, and it is here the story of the Davis millions makes connection with the Moffitt family.

Some years since, a number of supposed Hamilton County heirs to this fortune raised a sufficient sum of money to send an agent to the Motherland to investigate these stories. But this supposed wealth, like the fortune at the foot of the rainbow, was always just out of reach, and I believe none of those who helped finance this investigation were interested in carrying it further.

A full list of the children of William and Mary Davis Moffitt has not been secured, but our own foremother, Mary Moffitt Wilkinson is said to have been their fifth child, and, according to records found among our own family papers, was married to William Wilkinson, an Englishman, on the 26th day of the 3rd month, 1795. One account has it that they were married before coming to America. Another that they came over while small children and were married in North Carolina. The latter seems most likely, and this would place the arrival of the emigrant William in North Carolina as late as 1780, when it has generally been supposed that he settled there several years earlier.

Charles Moffitt married Mary Cox, and to them were born nine sons and five daughters as follows: Hugh, 1774; Margaret, 1775; Charles, 1776; Robert, 1778; Solomon, 1779; John, 1781; Samuel, 1783; Catharine, 1784; Ruth, 1786; Isaac, 1788; Jonathan, 1790; Mary, 1792; Silas, 1794; Rebecca, 1797.

But little is positively known concerning the ancestry of our foremother, Mary Cox. From the name it might be supposed she was of plain English stock. However, there is a family tradition that her ancestors came from Holland and that she was born on shipboard during the voyage to America. If this tradition be true, it would seem that the Cox family must have reached America near the middle of the Eighteenth Century, and to have been the first of our ancestors to arrive in this country.

SILAS AND HANNAH WILKINSON MOFFITT

All these names and narrations have been given as a preparation for the announcement of the most important event of the entire story which was the wedding of Silas, son of Charles Moffitt, to Hannah Wilkinson, daughter of William and Mary Moffitt Wilkinson, which occurred in Randolph County, North Carolina, on the 4th day of May, 1820.

From what is known, it is supposed that Silas Moffitt, at the time of his marriage, was a common farmer, although being a farmer at that time included having considerable acquaintance with a number of trades. His father is supposed to have been a farmer in moderate circumstances only, which would have been moderate indeed after having divided it among fourteen children.

The Wilkinson family was quite wealthy, as wealth was rated in those days, owning lands and slaves as well as a tan yard.

The son-in-law and the father-in-law both seemed to think the Northwest Territory offered them better opportunities, so two years after the wedding they started for Indiana on horseback in quest of their future homes. This land was bought direct from the government, and so far as is known, most of it was bought in Wilkinson's name.

After building rude cabins, these homeseekers returned to North Carolina for their families. On account of delays in disposing of his property Wilkinson was unable to return the following year and died in Carolina before he could arrange for the trip. His family started for Indiana soon after his death.

Grandfather and Grandmother Silas and Hannah Moffitt with their two children Mary and Charles, along with another family whose names have been lost, made the trip in the early fall and reached the site of their future home on the 8th day of the golden month of October, 1823.

Quoting from Haines' Hamilton County History—The family made the trip from North Carolina with a four-horse team and all their possessions in one wagon. They settled in the little log cabin which Mr. Moffitt had built the previous year and lived here for three years, when Mr. Moffitt erected a brick house out of brick which he himself had made; this being the second brick house erected in the township.

Silas Moffitt was a man of unusual energy and ability. And at the time of his death, in 1873, was the owner of several hundred acres of land in this county. In his early days he served as County Commissioner, and was

for two terms Treasurer of the Board of Trustees of his township at the time when there were three trustees, a treasurer, and clerk.

Silas and Hannah Wilkinson Moffitt were the parents of nine children. Mary, 1821-1905; Charles W., 1823-1886; Rhoda, 1825-1908; William C., 1827-1863; Hannah M., 1829-1901; Margaret, 1831-1878; Taca, 1836-1871; Silas Hugh, 1838-1913; Jonathan Wilkinson, 1841-1917. Three of these children were never married.

As I remember Grandfather Moffitt, he was a man rather small of stature with long white hair and beard and rather active for a man of his advanced age. During his later years he was troubled with partial blindness and made a trip to Cincinnati to have a cataract removed from his eye.

He passed away on the 28th day of August, 1873, after a short illness resulting from complications arising from hernia, a trouble from which he long had been a sufferer.

He was near 79 years of age at the time of his death and lacked only a few weeks of having lived and labored for half a century on the old Moffitt homestead.

After Grandfather's death Grandmother lived in Carmel with her two maiden daughters, Rhoda and Hannah, until her death twelve years later, in 1886. These pioneers were buried in the Carmel Cemetery as were also five of their nine children. Mary was buried at Crown Hill, Charles at the Farley Cemetery and Taca and Silas Hugh at White Chapel.

MARY MOFFITT

The oldest child of Silas and Hannah Moffitt was married to Joseph White, a farmer, about the year 1842.

They had two children, Silas M., 1844-1890, and Hannah M., 1852-1928.

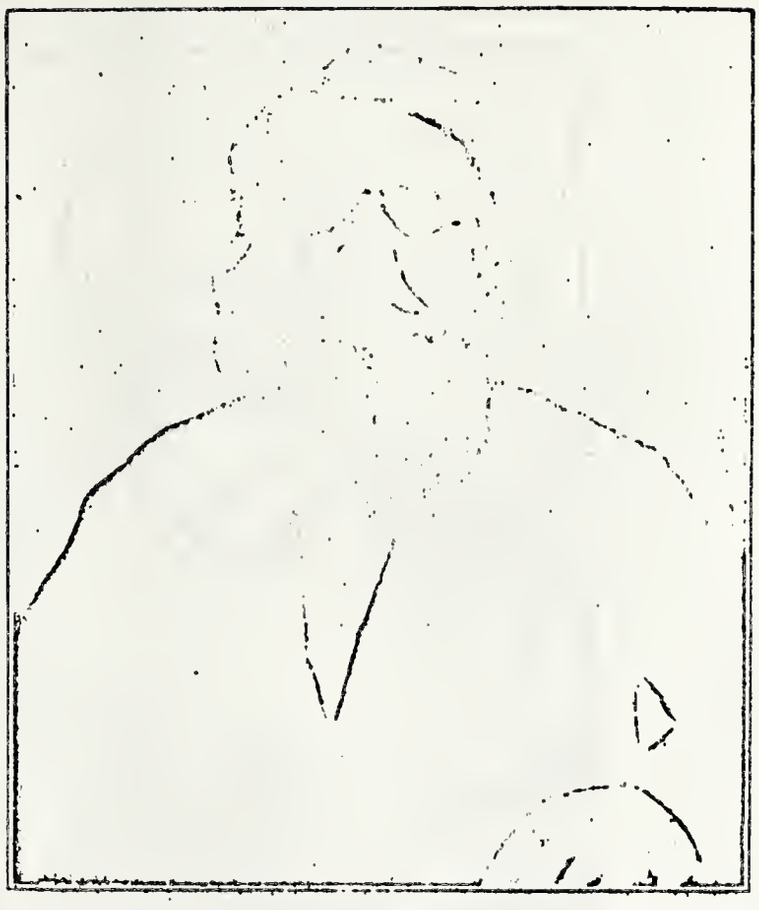
SILAS M. White married Ruth Harold about 1865. To them were born three children: Alma, 1866; Hugh, 1869-1877; and Ida, 1871-1920. Later he took his second wife, a Miss Sullivan. To them was born one child, Lora, who became lost to her family after reaching the age of young womanhood. Silas was a doctor and on account of some professional troubles went west and is supposed to have died in Washington about 1890.

Zelica Alma White was married to Ernest Byerly in 1903. They have three children: Ernest Harold, 1904-1905; Ruth Louise, 1906; and Russell Claire, 1909. All of them residing in California.

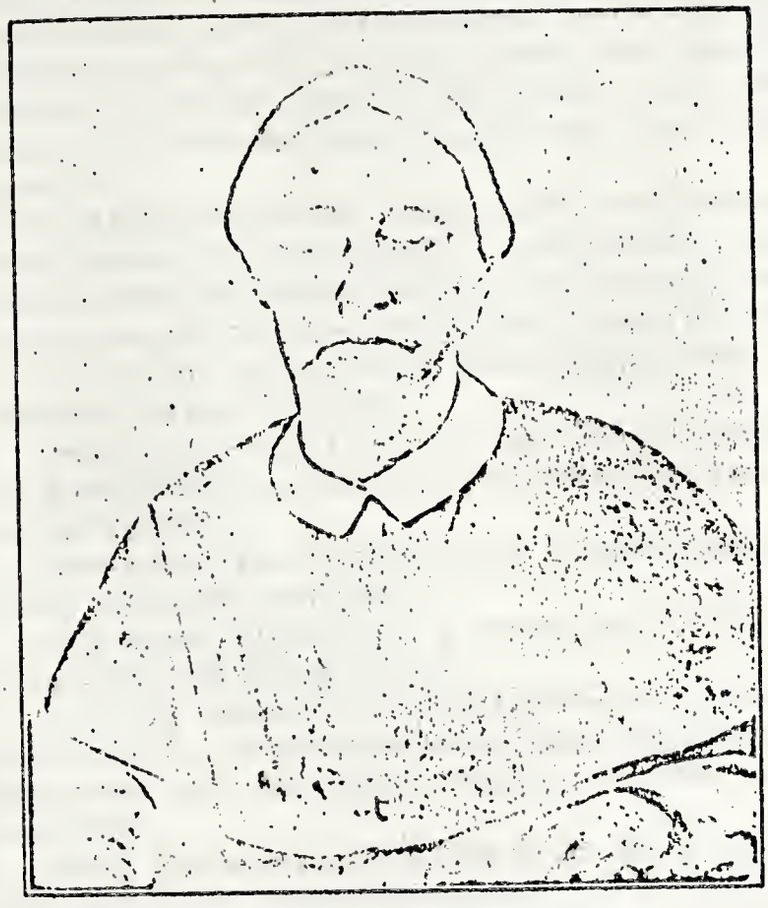
Ida White became the wife of Ernest Odle in 1895. They have one daughter, Beatrice, 1896, who is now engaged in Welfare Work in Chicago.

HANNAH M. White was married to Luther Swain from 1885 to 1890. To them was born one child, Ruth, 1886. Hannah spent her later years in the west with her daughter and grandchildren, and was buried at Hastings, Nebraska.

Ruth Swain was married to J. A. Pryor, 1912. Their children are: Marion Ruth, 1914; Joseph Ross, 1915; and Rosemary, 1924. They live in Nora, Nebraska.



SILAS MOFFITT
1794-1873



HANNAH WILKINSON MOFFITT
1799-1886

CHARLES W. MOFFITT

The eldest son was born in North Carolina only a few weeks before his parents began their long journey through the wilderness to their Hoosier home. Charles was married to Jane Power, 1859, and they spent most of their married life on their farm at the Marion-Hamilton County line. Their children were: Richard J., 1859-1906; Matilda, 1861; Albert, 1863-1897; William C., 1867; and Mary M., 1873. Charles was a farmer and stock raiser, owning at one time thirteen hundred acres of land. He died at the age of 63.

RICHARD J. married Ella Coombs in 1887. Their children are: Grover, 1889; Blanche, 1890-1917; William L., 1892; and Alice, 1894, and Mallie, 1894-1894, twins. Richard was a successful farmer and also served one term as trustee of Delaware Township, being elected as a Democrat. All the children have left the parental roof for homes of their own except Willie who is a bachelor farmer.

Grover married Hope Linville in 1918. Grover is a farmer. During the World's War he was called early into military service and reached the rank of Lieutenant.

Blanche was married to Rolla Tyner, a farmer. Their children are: Naomi, 1912; and Kathryn, 1915.

Alice became the wife of Oren Randall, 1917. Their children are: Lauras, 1922; and Richard J., 1926.

MATILDA was married to John B. Haverstick in 1883. They have spent their lives on their farm in the vicinity of Union Chapel. Their children are: M. Pearl, 1883; Alice J., 1886; Carrie L., 1888; and Howard M., 1892-1916.

Alice J. Haverstick married Adolph H. Schmidt, an optician, in 1918. Their children are: Charles Howard, 1922; and Jane, 1926.

Carrie L. Haverstick became the wife of Lora E. Tyner, 1911. Their children are: Harlan H., 1915; Wilbur E., 1918; and Vera Jean, 1925. Mr. Tyner is a farmer.

ALBERT and Christiana Haverstick were united in marriage in 1888. To this union was born three sons, Charles W., 1888; Silas C., 1891; and Rosco A., 1894. Albert was a prosperous farmer. His death, which occurred nine years after his marriage, was caused by a runaway accident on the streets of Noblesville. His wife and boys continued the farming operations till the time of her death, 23 years later.

Charles W. married Lola Klingensmith in 1911. Their children are: Mary Louise, 1912; and Maxine K., 1916. Charlie is a farmer and a busy one.

Silas C. and Elsie Henley were married in 1914. Their two children are; Denzel, 1916; and Albert, 1918. Silas is a farmer.

Rosco A. and Kathryn Hall were united in wedlock in 1920. They have one boy, Lyman, born 1922. Rosco lives in the old family homestead.

WILLIAM C. and Gertrude Rooker were wedded in 1892. Their children are: James T., 1893; Fredrick, 1895-1895; George Nelton, 1897; and Albert Richard, 1900. Albert is at present in the U. S. Navy serving on the Pacific. After the death of his wife, Gertrude, in 1909, Will married Louey Barber in 1912. They have one daughter, Helen, 1915. Will was a farmer and lived at his father's old homestead in Marion Co. He came to his untimely death at the age of 61 as the result of an automobile accident.

James T. married Dale Martz, 1914. Their children are: Florence, 1915; and Roberta. James resides in Chicago and is a traveling representative of a Chemical Company.

George N. and Clara Rohm were married in 1918. They have one daughter, Patty. George is manager of a shoe concern in Indianapolis. George was in uniform during the war.

MARY M. was married to Charles Hunt as recorded elsewhere and lives on the farm with her three children, Alice, Robert and Aley.

MARGARET MOFFITT

Was married to Isaac Burroughs in 1855 but Mr. Burroughs died shortly after their marriage as did also their infant child. In 1867 she was married to Cyrus Hunt, a farmer. To them were born three sons: Lawrence, 1868-1882; Rollin V., 1869; Charles L., 1874.

ROLLIN V. Hunt was married to Nellie Booth, 1894-1910. Their children were: Mae, 1895; Lester, 1897; Maude, 1900; Margaret, 1903; Frederic, 1906. Rollin is farming in Western Canada.

Lester is a pilot on the Pacific Ocean.

Margaret lives in Oklahoma and Frederic in New York.

Mae Hunt married John Bennett in 1912. They have two children: Harold, 1916; and Betty Jane, 1925. They live in Indianapolis.

Maude Hunt became the wife of Leland Gamon in 1918. They live in Berkley, Michigan. Their children are: Leland, Jr., 1920; Joanne, 1923; Jacqueline, 1926.

CHARLES L. Hunt was married to Mary Moffitt, 1901-1910. Charles is a farmer and electrician. Their children are: Alice, 1901; Robert, 1903; Aley, 1905.

TACA MOFFITT

Was married to Allen Myers, a farmer, in 1858. Two sons, Elmer L., 1860, and Artemus H., 1866, were the fruits of their married life.

ELMER L. Myers married Harriet B. Wright in 1880. They have eight children: Orin I., 1881; Lillie E., 1883; Ellis A., 1885; Mabel T., 1887; Ivan A., 1894; Paul E., 1902; Errol G., 1904; Lois H., 1905. Six of these children have been given a college education and most of them are teaching. To Elmer belongs the distinction of being the only minister of this Genealogy.

Orin Myers married Nora Moore in 1903. They have two children: Lowell M., 1904; and Harriet, 1909. Orin is a farmer by occupation.

Lillie E. Myers was married to Cove Horney, a farmer, in 1903. Their children are: Ruth, 1904; Amos, 1907; Merritt, 1912. Ruth, for a time, was engaged in Welfare Work in Europe under direction of the Friends Church.

Ellis A. Myers married Myrtle Stover in 1913. They have one child, James L., 1919. Ellis is a farmer and lives at Bloomingdale.

Ivan A. Myers married Helen Pigeon in 1917. Ivan is teaching. Their children are: Phoebe E., 1918; and Philip, 1923. Ivan served in the World War as Lieutenant. He was also a track athlete, and won honors for himself and his colors while in college.

ARTEMUS H. Myers and Eva Randall were married in 1887. Their children are: Telford, 1888; Thurlow, 1891-1891; Mamie and Marie (twins), 1892; Chauncey E., 1899; Raymond H., 1902. Artie is a farmer and dairy man and he and his boys operate a well managed farm. He also served his County for two terms in the State Legislature. Chauncey was in the Student Army at Wabash College.

Telford Myers and Edna Millikan were married in 1916. Their children are: Martha Evalyn, 1918; Esther Mae, 1920; Edith Lucille, 1924; Mildred Irene, 1927.

SILAS HUGH MOFFITT

The eighth child spent his entire life on the old Moffitt homestead. In 1865 he chose Melissa Jane Myers to share with him the joys and sorrows of a wedded life. They became the parents of six children: Nettie T., 1866; Naomi L., 1869; May M., 1870; Cassius D., 1872-1881; Alice V., 1875; Effie O., 1877-1878. Hugh carried on the occupation of farming with more than average energy and success and at one time was said to be the largest individual taxpayer in the township. Hugh died at the age of 75 years and was buried at White Chapel by the side of his wife, whose death preceded his by 28 years.

NETTIE T. Upon the early death of her mother, Nettie, then only a school girl, became the mistress of the old Moffitt homestead, a position in which she has won the esteem of all who know her. After the death of her father she was married to Wilson Kellam in 1915 and in their possession the old home still enjoys the well earned distinction of being a community center.

NAOMI L. was married to Arthur L. Pursel in 1895. To them have been born five children: Arthur M., 1895; Samuel Hugh, 1897; Frank and Florence (twins), 1902; Bertha May, 1907. Arthur L. and his boys are farmers.

Arthur M. Pursel married Faye Guilkey in 1919. Their two children are: Arthur Junior, 1921; and Edward Leon, 1923. Arthur M. was the only one of our boys in uniform to get overseas in the World War. He saw action in France and was wounded by shell fire of the enemy.

Florence Pursel was married to Archie Kinzer in 1925. They have one child, Barbara Alice, 1925.

MAY M. was joined in wedlock to Charles L. Williamson in 1896. They are the parents of three children: Howard Hugh, 1897; Wesley, 1900; and Mildred M., 1905. The boys are farmers and Mildred is in Chicago taking a course in vocal training.

Howard Williamson married Ruby Carson in 1926. Howard was in uniform at Camp Taylor.

ALICE V. became the bride of William H. Williams, of Terre Haute, June 1, 1897. At present they reside on a farm. They are the parents of two children: Raymond H., 1898; and Edith M., 1900-1921.

Raymond H. Williams was married to Myra Rigle in 1922.

1800624

JONATHAN WILKINSON MOFFITT

Jonathan Wilkinson Moffitt and Mary Roberts took the vows of husband and wife in 1863. To this union were born seven children: Rhoda, 1863-1920; Frank, 1865; Olive, 1867; Emma, 1871; Nellie, 1873-1880; Oscar, 1881; and Carrie, 1883. "Wilk" followed the occupation of farming all his life. He served two terms as trustee of the township. He died in 1917 at the age of seventy-six.

RHODA was married to Arthur P. Stanley, a farmer, in 1886. To them was born one child, Wilmer, 1887, who is in the implement business in Carmel.

FRANK married Lura Cline in 1897. Their children are: Bernal Kline, 1899; and Francis Harold, 1907-1915. Frank is a fruit grower who lives on a part of the first farm purchased of the government by Grandfather when he came to Indiana.

Bernal married Pearl Butler in 1922. Their children are: Winston Kline, 1924-1924; and Linda Lou, 1928. Bernal is in the employ of the U. S. Rubber Co. Bernal was in uniform in the Student Army at I. U.

OLIVE became the wife of Charles N. Brown, a farmer, in 1888. Their children are: Mary, 1893; Lois, 1896-1927; Ralph, 1901-1919.

Mary Brown was wedded to Leland S. Jessup, a farmer, in 1913. Their children are: Mary Louise, 1916; Ruthanna, 1918; and Ralph L., 1925.

Lois Brown was the bride of Harry West in 1922. Lois died in Colorado, where she had gone for her health.

EMMA was united in wedlock to Otis S. Roberts, a stockman, in 1888. Their children are: Russell O., 1890; Chester A., 1892; and Frank M., 1896.

Russell O. Roberts is a printer by trade. He married Bernice Hunt in 1913. Their children are: Robert W., 1914; Ethel May, 1917; and Mary Jane, 1927.

Chester A. Roberts chose Carrie Haines to become his wife in 1915. Chester is a farmer. Their children are: Donald O., 1915; Ruth Alice, 1917; and Kathryn Jeane, 1921.

Frank M. Roberts married Violet Johnston in 1923. While in Camp Taylor, Frank was promoted to the rank of Acting Sergeant.

OSCAR was married to Odessa Coffin in 1902. Their three sons are: John, 1904; Maurice, 1908; and George, 1909. Oscar and sons are millers in Carmel.

CARRIE became the wife of William Roeder, a policeman, in 1904. Their children are: Fred, 1905; Louise, 1907; Mary, 1911; Elizabeth, 1915; John, 1917; Laurel Mae, 1924. Louise is employed as a stenographer, and is an assistant in preparing this genealogy for the press.

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